



Procedure: Late withdrawal due to special circumstances

Purpose

To provide the process for administering applications for late withdrawal of enrolment due to special circumstances for coursework students.

Definitions

For general definitions, please refer to [Policy - Glossary: Student policies and procedures](#).

Academic misconduct: as defined in the Academic Integrity Rule.

Assessor: For the purpose of this policy and procedure, an assessor is a DSAAS staff member nominated by the Director, Student Administration, and/or the Director, Admissions and Student Governance, Student Administration and Academic Services to assess applications for late withdrawal due to special circumstances.

Class: a specific iteration of a course with a unique class number.

Complete application: an application containing relevant documentation that enables an assessment and determination of an outcome of the application.

Course requirements: for the purposes of this policy and procedure, activities students undertake during their course, such as independent private study, lectures, tutorials and other compulsory participation requirements, assessable work, including, but not limited to, assignments, tests, presentations, quizzes and examinations.

Impracticable: 'not capable of being done' in accordance with the [Department of Education Guide to special circumstances decision-making](#).

Independent documentation: documentation provided by a relevant independent authority (person, organisation or institution) with which the student has or had no personal relationship and which demonstrates a professional opinion.

Medical certificate/report: a document issued by a medical or health practitioner/professional that meets [AMA Guidelines on Medical Certificates](#).

Medical or health practitioner/professional: a professional person registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) or other relevant registration body, who is authorised to practice, or equivalent in other countries.

Special circumstance(s) circumstances that are beyond the student's control, do not make their full impact on the student known until on or after census date of the class, and make it impracticable for the student to complete the course requirements (Higher Education Support Act (HESA)).

Procedure

Application

1. Applications for late withdrawal due to special circumstances are only accepted where applications meet the threshold criteria as per the [Late withdrawal due to special circumstances Policy](#). Applications that do not meet the threshold criteria are declined.
2. Where a student, at the time of submission of the application, has effective enrolment in the course(s) from which they are seeking late withdrawal due to special circumstances, and where no grade has been assigned, the following applies:
 - a. Where a student submits an application after census date and on or before the withdrawn without failure deadline of the session, the class(es) will receive a grade of WD (for standard and non-standard sessions);
 - b. Where a student submits an application after the withdrawn without failure deadline and on or before the last date to withdraw with failure deadline of the session, the class(es) will receive a grade of WN (for standard sessions);
 - c. Class(es) in standard sessions cannot be dropped in the period after the last day to withdraw with failure date until grades release. Therefore, applications are not accepted during this period.
 - d. Class(es) in non-standard sessions cannot be dropped in the period after the last day to withdraw without failure date and typically until the grades release for the applicable teaching period. Therefore, applications are not accepted during this period.
3. Applications for late withdrawal due to special circumstances are to be made by the impacted student within the timeframe as per the Late withdrawal due to special circumstances policy. Students submit applications using the relevant [Manage My Degree form](#) in ISIS. Applications must include:
 - a. A written statement:
 - * explaining the reason(s) for requesting a late withdrawal due to special circumstances from the class(es); and
 - * explaining how alternative study or assessment arrangements, such as arrangements under the Extenuating Circumstances Application, did not aid the successful completion of the courses, as appropriate; and

- * addressing criteria 4.a), 4.b) and 4.c) below; and
- * explaining why the class(es) were not dropped prior to census date; and
- * if the student passed other courses in the same teaching session in which they are seeking late withdrawal due to special circumstances, explaining how their circumstances prevented them from achieving the requirements of the specific class(es) in their application.

b. Independent supporting documentation to evidence claims in the written statement that:

- * includes contact information of the independent authority providing the documentation for verification purposes.
- * is clear, in focus, readable, and in colour where possible.
- * is not altered in any way.
- * is translated into English where the original documentation is written in a language other than English. Documentation is translated in line with requirements on the [University's Document Certification and Translation webpage](#). Students must provide both the original and certified translation in their application.
- * is provided in a format accepted by the application portal: pdf, jpeg or png file. Videos, audio files and photographs are not considered appropriate evidence as their authenticity cannot be verified.
- * is issued in the student's current country of stay and/or the country where the circumstances occurred or worsened, as appropriate.

4. Applications for late withdrawal due to special circumstances must outline and evidence how the student's circumstances:

- a. **are beyond the student's control.** The student's situation is not due to the student's action or inaction, either direct or indirect, and is due circumstances that are unavoidable or unexpected, and for which the student is not responsible. This situation must be unusual, uncommon or abnormal; and
- b. **did not make their full impact known until on or after the census date** to the point that it was impracticable for the student to complete the class(es) and this was not apparent until after census date. For example: the circumstances occurred:
 - * before the census date, but unexpectedly worsened on or after census date to the point that it was not practicable for the student to complete the class(es); or

- * before the census date, but the full effect or magnitude did not become apparent until on or after census date to the point of not making it practicable to complete the class(es); or
 - * on or after the census date; and
- c. **made it impracticable to complete the course requirements;** and alternate study or assessment arrangements could not aid the successful completion of course requirements, as appropriate for the circumstances. The student could not reasonably undertake the necessary private study required, attend sufficient lectures or tutorials, meet any compulsory participation requirements, complete required assessable work or any other compulsory course requirements.
5. Typical circumstances that may be considered grounds for late withdrawal due to special circumstances, and independent supporting documentation to evidence the special circumstances criteria 4a, 4b and 4c may include, but are not limited to:
- a. **For medical reasons:** a medical certificate or report from a medical or health practitioner/professional stating:
- * the date the medical condition began or unexpectedly worsened; and
 - * the duration of the impact of the medical conditions; and
 - * how the condition affected the student's ability to successfully complete the course requirements; and
 - * when it became apparent that the student could not continue with their studies.
- b. **For family/personal reasons:** depending on the circumstances, a medical certificate or report from a medical or health practitioner/professional; and/or a statement from a qualified and registered counsellor or psychologist; and/or other independent documentation; and/or a combination of these documents, stating:
- * the date the personal circumstance began or unexpectedly worsened; and
 - * the duration of the impact of the circumstances; and
 - * how the student's circumstance affected their ability to successfully complete the course requirements; and
 - * when it became apparent the student could not continue their studies.
- c. **For employment-related reasons:** a letter from the student's employer stating:
- * the student's previous work hours and location; and

- * the student's current work hours and location; and
- * when the students' work hours and/or location changed, and when the student was notified of this change; and
- * the reason that the employer has changed the student's hours and/or location, including whether the reason for the change is due to the employer's requirements.

d. **For course or class related reasons:** a statement from the ANU Academic College that owns the course(s) from which the student is seeking late withdrawal due to special circumstances, stating:

- * that they have been disadvantaged by changed arrangements to their course or class; and
- * when the changes occurred; and
- * that the student could not change course or class without academic disadvantage.

6. The following circumstances are not considered grounds for late withdrawal due to special circumstances:

- a. difficulty with course content, academic workloads or poor grades; or
- b. lack of awareness or knowledge of ANU administrative systems and processes (e.g. WATTLE, ISIS, fee/financial payments, credit applications, late withdrawal, deferred examinations, HECS-HELP or FEE-HELP), or policies, procedures and legislation; or
- c. where it was already not practicable for the student to meet course requirements prior to the student's special circumstances emerging, e.g. where a student did not engage in course requirements or fail assessment items before the special circumstances occurred; or
- d. where students are aware prior to census date of circumstances and barriers that make it impracticable to complete course requirements; or
- e. where students could have reasonably avoided circumstances, e.g. work commitment clashes with the students' timetable; or
- f. A finding of Academic misconduct in a course.

Assessment

7. Applications for late withdrawal due to special circumstances are submitted to the [Academic Standards and Quality Office \(ASQO\)](#).

8. The Director, Student Administration, and/or the Director, Admissions and Student Governance, Student Administration and Academic Services nominate assessors within the Division of Student Administration and Academic Services (DSAAS) to assess applications for late withdrawal due to special circumstances.
9. To assist the application assessment process, the assessor may also consider other relevant information available from University records. This will particularly apply where the student seeks late withdrawal from class(es) where an interim grade is assigned at grade release and listed on the academic transcript (such as RP), to assist in determining eligibility for late withdrawal.
10. All independent supporting documentation is subject to verification.
11. Where the assessor considers that an application is not complete, ASQO may request additional supporting documentation from the student.
12. Students provide additional supporting documentation as directed in the communication from ASQO. Students may seek a reasonable extension to the timeframe provided.
13. Where the student does not provide additional supporting documentation as per the agreed timeframe, including any extensions, the application will be assessed as provided which may result in an unsuccessful application outcome.
14. Students who submit fraudulent documentation in their application are subject to relevant disciplinary action under relevant ANU policies, procedures and legislation.
15. Students who submit multiple applications for late withdrawal on the same grounds may be referred to student support services with their consent and may be referred for consideration under the Medical Leave Rule. Students may also be referred to student support services with their consent if there are concerns for the student's welfare.

Application Outcomes

16. The Director, Student Administration, and/or the Director, Admissions and Student Governance, Student Administration and Academic Services or delegate approve applications for late withdrawal due to special circumstances where the University is satisfied that a student has encountered special circumstances and has provided sufficient independent documentation to evidence their circumstances in line with the Late withdrawal due to special circumstances Policy and Procedure.
17. ASQO notifies a student of the outcome of an application for late withdrawal due to special circumstances, including a statement of the reason(s) for the decision, within 30 working days of:

- a. receipt of a complete application. If an application is returned to the student to request additional supporting documentation, the notification of an outcome occurs within 30 working days from the date the student resubmits the application; or
- b. the determined date, including any extensions, for the provision of additional supporting documentation, where the student does not provide additional documentation.

18. A student whose application for late withdrawal due to special circumstances is successful has the following adjustments administered for the relevant course(s) within 10 working days of the approval being made by Enrolment and Fees, Division of Student Administration and Academic Services:

- a. removal of fee liability of the course fees for the approved course(s).
- b. a grade of WD (withdrawal without failure) on their academic transcript for the approved course(s).

19. A student whose application for late withdrawal due to special circumstances is unsuccessful remains financially liable for the course fees, and:

- a. retains the original grade for the class, where the application was submitted after grades release.
- b. retains a WD grade for the class, where the application is submitted or the student withdraws on or before the last date to withdraw without failure.
- c. retains a WN grade for the class, where the application was submitted or the student withdraws after the last day to withdraw without failure and on or before the last date to withdraw with failure.

Removal of fee liability

20. Students who paid their tuition fees upfront to the University and who have an application for late withdrawal due to special circumstances approved, have their course fee payment credited to their ANU account by Enrolment and Fees. Students are then eligible to apply for a refund of the credited amount in accordance with the Student refunds Policy and Procedure.

21. Domestic students who deferred their tuition fees to HELP and who have an application for late withdrawal due to special circumstances approved, will have their HELP debt in relation to the approved course(s) remitted (removed) by Enrolment and Fees. The University submits advice of revised HELP liabilities to the Department of Education

regularly throughout the year. The management of HELP remissions are then undertaken by the Department of Education and the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

22. Students whose application for late withdrawal due to special circumstances is approved remain fully liable for their [Services and Amenities Fee \(SSAF\)](#) in the relevant session.

Appeals

23. Students may appeal a late withdrawal due to special circumstances application decision by lodging a written appeal within 20 working days of the date of the outcome (the Appeals period).
- * Requests to extend the appeals period can be submitted by email to appeals@anu.edu.au. Further evidence is required to substantiate why the appeal could not be lodged within the appeals period.
 - * It is at the discretion of the University Registrar, Student Administration and Academic Services (Registrar) or delegate to approve an extension request.
24. An appeal must be addressed to the University Registrar, Student Administration and Academic Services. Any appeal must include a written statement outlining the grounds for the appeal and addressing the reason(s) for the decision not to approve the application. Applications must be lodged with the Registrar by email to appeals@anu.edu.au.
25. Students are encouraged to submit relevant additional supporting documentation in their appeal application. Only documentation that was not available to the original decision-maker should be submitted. Requests to contact third parties for information will not be investigated.
26. The University Registrar (or delegate) will consider the appeal application and advise the student of the outcome in writing. In reaching their decision, the Registrar will consider all submitted independent supporting documentation (in totality). The outcome will include a statement of reasons.
27. The decision of the Registrar represents the final decision of the University in relation to a late withdrawal due to special circumstances application. Additional supporting documentation submitted following the appeals outcome being provided to the student will not be considered.
28. Students may subsequently seek to lodge an external appeal through the [Administrative Appeals Tribunal](#) or [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#).
29. An appeal is conducted in accordance with the ANU [Appeals Rule 2023](#).

Monitoring and Reporting

30. ASQO undertakes regular review activities to ensure applications are assessed consistently, and in accordance with policy, procedure and legislation.
31. ASQO submits an annual report on late withdrawal due to special circumstances applications to the Academic Quality Assurance Committee.
32. The report should highlight trends, risk and quality matters.

Document information

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